



COMMUNICATION
SCQF Level 6
SQA Unit Code
F428 04

WORKPLACE CORE SKILLS UNIT

What are Core Skills?

Core Skills are skills and abilities that everyone needs in their work. This is true for every job in every workplace.

The Core Skills are:

- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Employers look for Core Skills when they are appointing new staff. They also expect their existing staff to have these skills.

Core Skills are important because they help you work effectively in your present job and also prepare you for jobs that you will do in future. Developing your Core Skills helps you deal with today's rapidly changing world and improve your career prospects.

What is this Core Skills Unit about?

This Unit is about using your skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening in workplace situations.

Your assessor will explain anything in this Unit that you do not understand.

What should I know or be able to do before I start this Unit?

You should either:

- ◆ have achieved the Core Skills Unit in Communication at SCQF level 5 or an equivalent qualification

or

- ◆ be able to show that you have some experience of communicating in the workplace, for example writing minutes, reading detailed instructions, giving a presentation to colleagues

What do I need to do?

You will need to carry out each of the following three tasks:

Task 1: Reading and understanding

Read, understand, and evaluate a complex document related to your work. The document must contain either a set of facts and an analysis of them or a sustained argument. It will be a substantial and detailed text with complex sentences, specialist words, and concepts that may be unfamiliar to you. It is likely to have more than one purpose. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ work out the purpose of the document, for example:
 - ◆ persuade and inform
 - ◆ instruct and advise
- ◆ identify and summarise all the important ideas, key points, and supporting detail in the document
- ◆ evaluate the document's effectiveness in meeting its purpose and readers needs by commenting on content, style, and format, for example:
 - ◆ is it clear and easy to read
 - ◆ does it contain all the information a reader needs
 - ◆ does it present all aspects of a difficult issue
 - ◆ is it well structured
 - ◆ does it contain appropriate vocabulary, including technical/specialised words where necessary
 - ◆ is the writing style appropriate
 - ◆ do graphics enhance the meaning
 - ◆ could it be improved in any way?

Task 2: Writing

Produce a well-structured document or a collection of related documents that convey several items of complex information, opinions, or ideas. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ decide who will read your document and your reason for producing it
- ◆ choose a format for your piece of writing that is appropriately adapted to the readers and the subject matter, for example a complex project proposal or a trade magazine article
- ◆ choose effective layout, structure, vocabulary, and graphics (if appropriate) that make your piece of writing clear, suit your topic, and are appropriate for your readers
- ◆ vary your sentence structure, paragraphing, and vocabulary to suit the purpose of your writing and your intended readers
- ◆ gather, select, and present the information/ideas with supporting detail in a logical order, linking related information/ideas, emphasising the main points to assist with the clarity and impact of your piece of writing
- ◆ use spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure that are consistently accurate
- ◆ select alternative words for variety and effect, using a dictionary or thesaurus if needed

Task 3: Speaking and listening

Either make a substantial contribution to a discussion on a complex topic related to your work or give a short presentation on a complex work-related topic to one or more people. To do this you will have to:

- ◆ judge the degree of formality needed in a discussion or presentation and respond accordingly
- ◆ express your ideas clearly when speaking, for example choosing language that fits the topic and that your listeners will understand
- ◆ present your information or ideas in a logical order, linking related information or ideas to maximise impact
- ◆ vary tone, pace, and volume to emphasise the main points in what you are saying in order to help keep listeners' interest
- ◆ use your body language to improve your spoken communication, for example using open gestures, facial expressions, stance
- ◆ listen carefully to any questions from listeners and respond accordingly, for example by synthesising points of view expressed
- ◆ adapt your speaking to take account of sensitive issues or audiences, for example by giving examples to clarify certain points and avoiding jargon words
- ◆ pick out the main points another speaker is making on a complex topic
- ◆ interpret the way other speakers use their voices and body language to help get their message across, for example the tone of voice that they use, nuances, and inconsistencies that may be present
- ◆ listen carefully to what is being said and ask questions to clarify anything you do not understand

How will I show that I have achieved this Unit?

You will need to evidence to show that you have achieved all three tasks in this Unit.

For Task 1 Reading and understanding: you might have written evidence such as a presentation you have prepared based on what you have read. Alternatively, your assessor may ask you questions, watch what you do, and make notes or a recording of what was said and/or done.

For Task 2 Writing: you may be able to use the document you have produced for Task 1 as evidence. Your document(s) is likely to total 700 words or more.

For Task 3 Speaking and listening: your assessor will observe you and take notes or a recording of the activity, which should last a minimum of five minutes, including time for questions. You should also keep a brief note explaining the situation, for example:

- ◆ a plan
- ◆ self-evaluation
- ◆ any audio-visual materials or papers used to support the activity

You must show that you can do the whole of each individual task at one time. You are not allowed to gather evidence from different situations for different parts of the task.

What might be involved?

This Unit may be achieved in many ways. Examples of tasks you might do are:

- ◆ summarise and evaluating a substantial research report from a trade or professional journal
- ◆ analyse and evaluate the annual report of a competitor company; inferring the readership and purpose; commenting on the effectiveness of the presentation
- ◆ write a detailed report to management on the incidence and causes of recent accidents in the workplace, with suggestions as to how the accident rate could be reduced in future
- ◆ produce a well-structured report of a complex laboratory investigation that draws detailed conclusions from the research evidence
- ◆ give a work briefing for performance of a complex task or procedure, responding to questions
- ◆ make a formal presentation that collates and analyses information and data and presents conclusions on findings from a substantial work project that encourages discussion with colleagues

What can I do next?

You could consider doing other Core Skills Units in:

- ◆ Numeracy
- ◆ Information and Communication Technology
- ◆ Problem Solving
- ◆ Working with Others

Your assessor can advise you about this.

Guidance for assessors

Further information about delivery, assessment, and evidence requirements for this Unit can be found in the corresponding Assessment Support Pack. In addition, the *Guide to Assessing Workplace Core Skills* provides further information on assessment.

Disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual learners should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering alternative competence standards for Units.

Additional advice and guidance for learners with disabilities and/or additional support needs should initially be discussed with the centre where the learner is registered.

If the centre is unable to offer a satisfactory solution then the learner, usually in conjunction with the centre, should contact the External Verifier of the Awarding Body where the learner is registered for certification.

Information on Awarding Body requirements to become an 'approved' Awarding Body is published in the SQA Accreditation *Awarding Body Criteria (2007)*.

http://www.sqa.org.uk/files_ccc/AccreditationAwardingBodyCriteria.pdf

ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Credit value

6 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 6



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